



**ELEVEN GENERAL ORDERS\*\*\***

“There are few of life’s problems that cannot be solved with the proper application of a high explosive projectile.”

That is the form of conflict resolution familiar to every Veteran, but the transmogrification of those partisan perceptions, and the power and skills of a warrior to non combatant is not merely one of training and mind set, its also one of education and communication. The Inalienable Rights Project, Inc., and the Veterans Collaborative were formed as non-profit corporations, (501(c)4, and (c)3 respectively) for the purpose of aiding and assisting returning combat veterans and those among us who are socially disadvantaged, and civilly disabled. Our work with returning combat veterans has been specific to those individuals diagnosed or with presumptive diagnoses of traumatic brain injury, (TBI) and traumatic

epilepsy. TBI can cause a wide range of functional short- or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions.<sup>1</sup> TBI can also cause epilepsy and increase the risk for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other brain disorders that become more prevalent with age.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques in a collaborative setting have proven useful as a tool in unclogging the communication tunnel. As long as an individual is allowed to remain in that tunnel, their mental status will remain a strange mixture of things they do and things that happened to them, with data being filtered through the heuristics and biases necessary for survival in a hostile environment.

Communication disorders as a consequence of TBI, not only affect the individual, they also affect the interacting party (ies). The ADR technique of negotiation when used to gain acceptance by the veteran to "exit their tunnel," allows them to frame their own choices causing them to focus on their "expected values," abstracting away from expected utilities. The various modifications and disguises that they have used to cloak original intentions become mere sublimations. Battlefield tactical and strategic skills are in many ways no different than the skills necessary in civilian life. There will always be an incentive, and an objective. What may or may not be different is the ultimate motivation of the actors. In TBI

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<sup>1</sup> National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Traumatic brain injury: hope through research. Bethesda (MD): National Institutes of Health; 2002 Feb. NIH Publication No.: 02-158

the motivation to communicate may deteriorate, as may perceptual and behavioral issues.

For this population, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, alternative dispute resolution, in a collaborative setting is like the smell of chocolate, familiar and comforting. If one were to observe any species in a social environment, evidence of collaborative practice, negotiation, mediation and arbitration would be readily evident, for survival depends upon "getting along." What makes alternative dispute resolution techniques unique is that the decision maker must take part in the decision; they have to give up, acquiesce or take constructive action to something. Reciprocity is expected as the standard of fairness, motive and intent are easily recognized for their real worth. Every one of us, formerly trained in an alternative dispute resolution modality or not, has used these techniques from the time we were born. We negotiate for attention, allowance, family chores, a gift, parental affection, etc. Who among us has never, as a child asked a parent for money, seeking a larger amount than actually needed, because we knew that the harbinger of the funds would eventually give us an amount sufficient for what we wished to do? Or who has not gone to Mom when Dad said no, because Mom would always (or usually) side with us or vice-versa or be the mediator to Dad/Mom's polarized position? When we took the SAT's and were looking at college's, we collected the catalogs of where we wanted to

go, and sat down with Mom and Dad to determine where we could afford to go, taking into consideration our goals, desires, wants, needs, and finances. So our parents as part of there collaborative practice as parents were arbitrators of our fate.

One could draw the conclusion that ADR is only for material conflict Resolution; that the concomitant symptomatology of TBI is best left to rigid practice protocols/guidelines. Nothing could be further from reality. Like any other modality, ADR is shaped by its history, we learn to comply with social pressures in order to avoid conflict and remain connected with others. Our task as collaborative professionals is to adjust relations and resolve conflicts so as to allow the most effective expectations of mankind in a civilized society with a minimum of friction and waste. A task that can be equally applied to lawyer, physician, counselor and business person as well as the rest of a civilized society. Making use of alternative dispute resolution techniques, when working with Veteran's in a collaborative practice forum is slightly more difficult than asking Dad for the keys to the car when you first got your drivers license. If a combat veteran was asked what his motivation was, s/he would universally state, to return home to family and loved ones in one peace. That motivation once achieved becomes a consequence for why their morale does not reflect their performance as civilians. Cognitive functioning and communication skills are the two areas that are most frequently altered in traumatic brain injury

victims. ADR techniques allow for the instruction of purpose without the requirement of reaction. The individual's cognitive and communication skills must be retrained to look forward, understanding that how they see things is both the problem and the solution.

Gerald N. Unger  
Executive Director & GC  
Inalienable Rights Project, Inc.  
3203 Cranberry Hwy. Bldg. C  
Wareham, MA. 02538  
508.759.0009

Eleven General Orders, refers to the Eleven General Orders that individuals in the military must and do learn. The Orders refer to duties required of a sentry, i.e., "Walk my post in a military manner, keeping always on the alert and observing everything that takes place within sight or hearing."